

HOUSE BILL REPORT

HJM 4015

As Reported by House Committee On:
Education

Brief Description: Petitioning congress to change the definition of highly qualified teachers to include career and technical teachers hired directly from industry.

Sponsors: Representatives Ormsby, Priest, Fromhold, Orcutt, Sells, Hankins, Hasegawa, Kenney and Morrell.

Brief History:

Committee Activity:

Education: 2/15/07, 2/20/07 [DPS].

Brief Summary of Substitute Bill

- Requests Congress to make a change in the definition of highly qualified teacher under the No Child Left Behind Act to include career and technical teachers who come into the teaching profession directly from industry and teachers certified under First Peoples' language/culture and history certification programs.

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

Majority Report: The substitute bill be substituted therefor and the substitute bill do pass. Signed by 9 members: Representatives Quall, Chair; Barlow, Vice Chair; Priest, Ranking Minority Member; Anderson, Assistant Ranking Minority Member; Haigh, McDermott, Roach, Santos and P. Sullivan.

Staff: Barbara McLain (786-7383).

Background:

The federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) requires all teachers of core academic subjects to meet a federal definition of "highly-qualified" to teach in that subject. The core academic subjects are language arts, reading, English, science, mathematics, history, government, geography, economics, arts, civics, and designated world languages. The definition of highly qualified requires at least a bachelor's degree, full state teacher certification, and demonstrated subject area and teaching competencies. The competencies can be met in a number of ways.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Schools that receive Title I funds must notify parents if a student has been taught for more than a month by a teacher who is not considered highly qualified. Washington must file annual reports on the number of teachers in the state not considered highly qualified.

In Washington, approximately two-thirds of career and technical education (CTE) teachers have received their state certification on the basis of business and industry experience rather than by earning a bachelor's degree. These teachers have at least three years of paid work experience in their field, complete a CTE teacher preparation program, and receive certification in a specific specialty area.

Although CTE is not considered a core academic subject for purposes of the NCLB, Washington encourages school districts to adopt course equivalencies for academic and career and technical education courses and to integrate academic instruction into CTE classes. The NCLB would require a mathematics class taught through a CTE program, for example, to be taught by a teacher considered highly qualified to teach mathematics.

In 2003, the State Board of Education created a pilot project for First Peoples' language/culture teacher certification. Under the project, participating tribes certify that an individual meets the tribe's standards for teaching tribal language and culture, and the state issues that individual a limited teaching certificate. A First People's language/culture teacher may or may not have a regular teaching certificate or a bachelor's degree. First People's language/culture is not a core academic subject, but if the project were extended to include First Peoples' history, school districts may be concerned that social studies was not being taught by a teacher considered highly qualified under the NCLB.

Summary of Substitute Bill:

Congress is requested to make a change in the definition of highly qualified teacher under the NCLB to include CTE teachers who come into the teaching profession directly from industry and teachers certified through First Peoples' language/culture and history certification programs.

Substitute Bill Compared to Original Bill:

Congress is also requested to include teachers certified through First Peoples' language/culture and history programs as highly qualified.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony:

(In support) The best teachers of career and technical programs are often the ones with outside life and work experience. They can make learning relevant and interesting for students,

moving beyond books and chalkboards. It makes no sense to consider them not highly qualified to teach. A teacher with years of experience in the field, who top national organizations recognize for his expertise, cannot teach an applied chemistry class because he is not considered highly qualified. A CTE-certified teacher receives no less instruction in pedagogy and instruction than a regularly-certified teacher. These are experts in their field. Colleges of education no longer offer teacher certification programs in CTE. The NCLB has Congress' attention over the next year and this is an opportunity for Washington to make its comments known.

(Opposed) None.

Persons Testifying: (In support) Representative Ormsby, prime sponsor; Kathleen Lopp, Washington Association for Career and Technical Education; Andrew Nydam, Olympia High School; Gil Mendoza, Tacoma School District; Karen Davis, Washington Education Association; Kyra Kester, Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction; and Wes Pruitt, Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board.

Persons Signed In To Testify But Not Testifying: None.